



# M E D I A   R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## Department of Education Announces High School Redesign Conference

Nashville, TN – The Tennessee Department of Education today announced its first *High School Redesign Initiative for Title I High Priority High Schools Conference* for districts with Title I schools.

The Department of Education will kick-off the new initiative Oct. 30-31. Teams from Memphis City, Metro Nashville, Knox County, Hamilton County, Jackson-Madison County, Campbell County, Henderson County, Union County Schools and Bradford Special School District will learn about basic practices in redesigning struggling high schools and special Title I school improvement funds that will support those redesign efforts.

"We are excited to get these school districts together and really begin the process of helping these schools meet the challenges necessary to successfully prepare students for college and the workforce," said Education Commissioner Timothy Webb.

As part of the kick-off, school districts will be eligible for planning grants up to \$2.5 million to research high school models for their eligible high schools. Recently Tennessee was approved by the U.S. Department of Education for the Title I School Improvement Grant to target funds to struggling Title I high schools. The planning grants will allow schools to investigate models of successful high schools across the nation and to prepare an application to participate in this multi-year initiative.

"We know that turning around a struggling, high priority school takes substantial resources over several years," said Julie McCargar, Executive Director of Federal Programs. "We believe these districts need the time and resources to enact change and begin a successful restructuring."

The Department expects to offer grants to 12 out of 33 eligible high schools this year through a competitive process. Successful schools will be entitled to receive a maximum of \$500,000 a year annually to implement their new designs. The grants may be renewed annually for up to two years after a school has exited high priority status. This will allow any reform initiatives to be fully funded and implemented to ensure sustainability.

The conference is being held at the Airport Marriott in Nashville.

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